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Lesbians, Gay Men and The Production of Scale in East Germany

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ABSTRACT

This article uses the concept of 'scale' to analyse the relative importance of local, national and global places, events, and explanatory frameworks in everyday lives in late communism. It uses a case study of lesbians and gay men living in East Berlin in the 1970s and 1980s, and asks how these groups negotiated the restrictions of life under state socialism. It argues that both individuals and groups used scale in two ways: as an imaginative tool for making sense of the world, and as a political strategy for dealing with the state. In both cases, 'scaling', or choosing the scale at which one located oneself and one's actions, was a means of disrupting and even contesting the rigid hierarchies of state socialist rule.

KEYWORDS

Scale; lesbian; gay; Berlin; East Germany; GDR

By the mid 1970s, state socialist rule in Eastern Europe had undergone a significant shift. As communist regimes were forced to accept that their populations were unlikely to embrace socialism on ideological grounds, they moved to a more pragmatic strategy of rule. Consumerism, lifestyle, and opportunities for personal self-actualization replaced Marxism-Leninism and the joys of the collective as the key 'selling points' of socialism. Paul Betts and Paulina Bren have argued that state socialist societies became increasingly individualized in this period.¹ Communist regimes now offered their subjects limited latitude in terms of the music they listened to, the TV they watched, and the clothes they wore: but there was an expectation that these would remain privatized pleasures. Increased secret police surveillance was part of this preoccupation with keeping things in the right place – an attempt to ensure that individuality was not spilling out of the private sphere, and that matters were not being taken too far. Eastern European rulers may have felt compelled to allow some degree of individualism, but they also made strenuous attempts to contain and compartmentalize it.

Historians are just beginning to explore how people made sense of these changes and how they affected their sense of self.² It is certainly true, as Betts has argued, that many residents of the Eastern Bloc focused their attention on the private sphere, concentrating their energies on personal relationships, self-development through reading, or good times at the dacha or the sports club. A further, and sometimes complementary development, were the global and transnational influences on how Eastern Europeans spent their time,

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what they wore, what music they listened to, and how they thought and felt about life under socialism. One of the most exciting historiographical trends of the past decade has been this exploration of what the 'Imaginary West' meant in concrete terms, and how it was incorporated into indigenous imaginaries.³ Did a love of the Beatles make one feel less Soviet?⁴ Did a Polish punk fan feel a greater attachment to the global punk community than to her or his local 'scene'?⁵ These developments raise important questions about the relationship between where events took place, and the meaning attributed to them.⁶ Did the relocation of individual agency to the private sphere lead to a narrowing of mental horizons – or could events that took place in private still feel like they had significance beyond the walls of the home? We are just starting to think about how the privatization of the 1970s and 1980s articulated with growing global awareness within Eastern Europe.⁷

This article takes up these questions, using a case study of lesbians and gay men living in East Berlin in the 1970s and 1980s. This was a group at the cutting edge of social change in the Eastern Bloc. Sex between men had been decriminalized in 1968 (sex between women had never been prohibited), but the authorities' expectation was that same-sex sexuality would remain firmly behind closed doors.⁸ Homosexuality remained an almost total taboo in the public sphere. Meanwhile, news of the blossoming gay rights movement in West Germany and beyond filtered through via Western TV and visitors. Caught between a prohibitive public sphere at home, and a rapidly developing international gay politics abroad, how did gay men and lesbians negotiate the restrictions of state-socialist rule? I approach this question using the concept of 'scale' to analyze the relative importance of local, national, and global places, events, and explanatory frameworks in everyday lives. As I will argue, the production of scale was both an imaginative tool for making sense of the world, and a political strategy in dealing with the state.

Why scale and what do I mean by it? In its most straightforward sense, 'scale' describes the values used to measure something – for example, the key explaining the relationship between the actual size of a landscape and its representation on a map. However, as well as a unit of measurement, scale can also be a category of analysis.⁹ Human geographers use scale to describe the different levels at which events can be analyzed: typically, the smallest scale is the body, and the largest scale is the world.¹⁰ Scale's usefulness as a category of analysis is not merely academic: humans use scale on an everyday basis to make sense of events and places, putting them in categories such as 'home', 'my neighbourhood' [the local], 'London' [the urban], 'the South-East' [the regional], 'Great Britain' [the national], 'Europe', and so on. As these examples suggest, scale in this sense is not a fixed or given category. Like other terms of analysis more familiar to historians (race, class, gender), it is produced through thoughts, words and deeds, and its meaning changes over time. 'The South-East', for example, has a somewhat different set of connotations to a UK citizen of the early 21st century than it did in the mid-19th century. Nor can the meanings of 'the South-East' be understood without understanding its relationship to other points on the scale (its containment of London, its economic and geographical position relative to other parts of the UK, its connections with the global economy). This 'relational' quality of scale is an important one.

While the concept of scale is a fundamental – and hotly contested – one for geographers,¹¹ historians have been much less ready to embrace the term. Jacques Revel and his collaborators are a rare exception: their collection *Jeux d'échelles* [*Plays of Scales*] (1992) was born out of a concern with historians' scale of observation.¹² They attempted to address the gulf between microhistory and the global and epoch-spanning works distinctive to French

historiography by studying the effects of historians' focus on either the micro or the macro level. Just as roads, habitations and features of the natural landscape appear and disappear on differently scaled maps, so too do features of historical experience and change come in and out of focus in studies which examine different geographical and temporal spans. Revel et al. came to the conclusion that 'playing with scales', and moving between them, was essential in order to grasp the complexity of the past. Although this collection has been much cited, the concept of 'scale' has not gained much traction amongst historians, despite its potential for helping us to think about the ways in which the history of everyday life is embedded in larger processes.¹³

What is striking about the Revellian usage of 'scale' is that it is seen primarily as a tool for historians. Rather like a cartographer, the historian is more-or-less free to choose the scale or scales that she or he finds appropriate and illuminating. But historical actors' sense of scale is given much less attention. Although Bernard Lepetit, in his contribution to *Jeux d'échelles*, makes the pertinent observation that a military commander, a customs official, and a fisherman on foot will have a very different relationship to the coastline, the point is not further developed.¹⁴ Revel and his collaborators were largely concerned with historical framing, and how the seeming gulf between micro- and macrohistory could be overcome. This article does not address these methodological questions, despite their continuing relevance. It is concerned not with the historian's choice and production of scale, but with the ways that historical actors 'played with' and produced scale, both consciously and unconsciously.

How do people use scale in their attempt to make sense of the world and their place in it? It may be worth restating that the points on any scale are not 'given'. As we shall see, there are multiple ways of organizing a scale, and multiple potential sites on any particular scale. The East German everyday was embedded in an array of differently sized contexts: the lived experience of the body, and the ways in which individuals chose to present their bodies; the family; the apartment; the building; the 'corner'; the neighbourhood, with its bars and sites of sociability; the city; the GDR; a sense of 'Germany' which included West Germany; Europe (however defined); the Eastern Bloc; the worldwide socialist movement; global communities such as music or sports fans; 'the West'; the world. Scale was a way of keeping track of the relative importance and meanings of these contexts, and the relationships between them. This article asks what perspectives people used to make sense of their everyday lives, and how they located themselves in the world. When people put themselves on the map, what scale did they use, and why?

The question of where individuals located their actions is a particularly pertinent one for historians of late socialism. Scale was fundamental to state-socialist rule, on both a metaphorical and practical level. Rigid scalar hierarchies underlay geo-politics, governance, economic planning, and cultural production. The East German state's production of scale was extremely powerful, and explicitly hierarchical – from the USSR as a paternal superstate to which one had obligations of both obedience and imitation, Berlin's eternally repeated status as 'Capital City of the GDR', and the abolition of the *Länder* or federal states, in 1952. Authority in the GDR took the form of a nested hierarchy: USSR-GDR-*Bezirk* [region]-*Kreis* [district]. Even the quasi-official label of 'workers' and peasants' state' sat the individual firmly *within* the state. The higher point on the scale always trumped the lower. Moreover, each level of the scale was assumed to be entirely encapsulated by, and identical with, the ones above it. As the slogans went, 'the family is the smallest cell of society', 'learning from the Soviet

Union means learning how to win'. In the 'workers' and peasants' state', how could the interests of the state and its functionaries differ from that of the citizen? In the ideal socialist world, no matter what resolution the map was printed at, it would show the same thing.

In reality things were not quite that simple, as every socialist citizen knew. The historiography of the past twenty years has uncovered multiple conflicts of interest both within the socialist state and amongst its citizens, as well as flows of information which disrupted the state's aspirations towards ideological homogeneity. For lesbians and gay men living in East Berlin in the 1970s and 1980s, these contradictions and tensions were all too obvious. In spite of decriminalization, popular homophobia was widespread, and homosexuality remained a taboo in the public sphere: gay men and lesbians were starved of both information and ways to meet like-minded people. For much of this period, even newspaper contact ads which alluded to same-sex sexuality were not allowed. Yet those with the good fortune to be born in, or have the opportunity to move to, the East German capital found a range of spaces, traditions, and practices through which same-sex sexuality could be explored.¹⁵ Housing policy favoured new-build housing on the outskirts of the city, creating space for the development of sub-cultural identities in run-down but central neighbourhoods such as Prenzlauer Berg (a centre of gay and lesbian activity).¹⁶ A cluster of gay sites around Schönhauser Allee earned it the moniker 'the warmest corner in the East' - a play on 'warm brothers', a slang term for gay men. Bars such as 'Burgfrieden', 'Café Peking', and 'Schoppenstube', the car park on Schönhauserallee, the public toilet on Humannplatz, and the sauna at the public baths on Oderbergerstrasse triangulated this area. Apartments could be sites of political activism, social nodes or 'party flats', and even unofficial libraries.¹⁷ The gay community was also able to draw on pre-existing sites of sex and sociability such as the 'Klappen' or cottages in public toilets and parks, and traditions like the drag balls held for New Year and carnival.¹⁸

For lesbians and gay men, the invisibility of homosexuality for much of this period made engagement with the West both necessary and energizing. Before 1961, gay men and lesbians had been frequent visitors to West Berlin bars. But even after the closing of the border, such personal contacts did not come to an end: the East Berlin World Festival Games in 1973 famously brought together young people from around the world, including gay activists. The proximity of a cluster of gay bars to the German-German border in Friedrichstrasse meant that Western visitors on day visas easily found their way to them - and from the 1980s, gay city guides to West Berlin such as *Berlin von hinten* [*Berlin from behind*] began to include sections on the East too. West German media also played an important role, with the TV screening of Rosa von Praunheim's *Nicht der Homosexuelle ist pervers sondern die Situation, in der er lebt* [*Not the homosexual is perverse, but the situation in which he lives*] in 1973 being a key moment. East German activists soon began to self-identify as 'gay' rather than 'homosexual', mirroring the development of new social movements elsewhere.¹⁹

Despite repeated requests, the authorities were determined that there should be no official homosexual representation within the state's mass organizations.²⁰ This ban on gay and lesbian public self-organization pre-determined a degree of conflict between citizens and state. East Berlin saw two waves of gay activism: the first, in the 1970s, centred on the *Homosexuelle Interessengemeinschaft Berlin* (HIB) - a loose collective of men and women, with a core of about a dozen committed activists, and inspired by the new gay politics emerging in the West.²¹ In the 1980s, a second wave of gay rights groups emerged under the protective wing of the Evangelical Church. Following the Church-State Agreement of 1978, a range of dissident groups, including punks, blues fans, environmentalists and

feminists, were able to make use of Church facilities such as meeting places and rudimentary printing facilities. In a society where the public sphere was otherwise under the control of the state, such opportunities were invaluable: for the lesbian and gay community, they made the construction of a national network of groups possible for the first time. Throughout this period, gay men and lesbians organized together and apart. While most of the HIB's activities were mixed, it had a women's group, and attempted to organize a GDR-wide gathering of lesbians in 1977. By the 1980s, the group Lesbians in the Church were organizing women-only events which drew heavily on Western feminist thought and activist strategies. But the small size of the East German scene, and the dearth of available meeting spaces, meant that separate gay and lesbian spheres never emerged.

The state's response to this activism was twofold: on the one hand, a belated (and inevitably limited) liberalization took place, culminating in the equalization of the age of homo- and heterosexual consent (lowering the age of consent for same-sex activity from 18 to 14), and the release of the film *Coming Out* in November 1989.²² On the other hand, activist groups faced secret police surveillance, and attempts to infiltrate and undermine their networks. The state may have conceded homosexuality a limited degree of visibility, but it was determined to avoid the development of an autonomous and competing political agenda.

This article, then, examines the production of scale through a close reading of four sources. The first two case studies show how individuals used scale as an imaginative strategy – a way of making sense of their lives under socialism, both at the time and in retrospect. The final two show how scale could be used as a political tool to gain traction in negotiations with the state and its authorities. All four cases suggest that 'scaling' – choosing where to locate oneself and one's actions – was a means of disrupting and even contesting the rigid hierarchies of the socialist system.

Icarus Over the City

Where better to begin an exploration of the imaginative production of scale than with a poem? The poet and writer Ulrich Berkes was one of the first authors to openly address homosexuality in print. His 1976 collection, *Ikarus über der Stadt* [Icarus over the city], alluded repeatedly to his life as a gay man in Berlin.²³ Although this collection appeared only eight years after the legalization of sex between men, it articulates a surprising sense of freedom. In the title poem 'Icarus', the protagonist grows wings one seemingly ordinary day. He flies out the kitchen window, rising above the 'oil-black canal'. 'How tiny the people are from my heavenly height and nobody sees me', he wonders, and breaks through the grey layer of dust which covers the city, flying into the sun and the 'blinding blue' (*blitzenden blau*).²⁴ Unlike the classical Icarus, his wings do not disintegrate, and he returns to earth gently and of his own accord. A second poem, 'flying couple', describes its protagonists rising above the city and observing it laid out beneath them. The love-making pair float gently from their bed, through walls turned blue and transparent. Blown in the air 'like a balloon', they fly over 'roofs with white cats, a power station where people are working, a quiet stadium'. The couple turns 'dizzily' around each other, chimneys spray fountains of sparks into the air, and the lovers land safely back in their bed, still chest-to-chest.²⁵ Flying is here a metaphor for sex, and its temporary transcendence, but it is striking that rather than falling away, the city seems to come into focus. A third poem, 'Places of love', also contrasts intimate spaces of sexual contact – a deserted swimming pool, a changing room, a corrugated iron roof hidden

behind bushes – with the sheer scale of the city. It begins: ‘The city is big.’ But despite the city’s size, and the pressing nature of desire, places for love are hard to find. ‘The city offers us no space under the sun and our skin is hot like the heavens.’²⁶

The playfulness of these poems rests on the disruption of conventional hierarchies of scale. All three poems contrast big with small, the anonymity of the city with the intimacy of a lovers’ embrace, the need for privacy with the desire to survey. Berkes repeatedly confounds his readers’ sense of scale. The city is large, but can appear small: ‘how tiny the people are from my heavenly height’. ‘The city is big’, but ‘offers us no space’. The bed is small, but we can journey across the heavens. Berkes shows us how we inhabit a number of scales simultaneously: the body, the bed, the apartment, the entire city. The home acts as both a starting point and as somewhere to return to. Rather than a place of retreat or even claustrophobia, it is a space of possibility. In *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard discusses a number of poems about ‘weightless houses’, whose walls are ‘transparent’, ‘diaphanous’ or open to the winds. ‘A house that is as dynamic as this’, Bachelard concludes, ‘allows the poet to inhabit the universe. Or, to put it differently, the universe comes to inhabit his house.’²⁷ As in Berkes’ poems, the distinction between different points on the scale is collapsed. Rather than laying claim to a private sphere, Berkes eliminates the distinction between the private and the public. In ‘flying couple’, the lovers are simultaneously over the city and in bed, caught up in the immediate sensations of the body and detached floating observers of the urban landscape. ‘Icarus’, too, plays out a dream of invisible surveillance. Quotidian concerns – the workplace, the power station, even the dusty pollution of the city sky – are dwarfed and forgotten. But both end with a voluntary return to the everyday.

Berkes’ playful approach to conventions of scale is key to the feeling of freedom at the heart of these poems. ‘Icarus’ and ‘flying couple’ describe moments of transcendence, the fantasy of breaking through (the walls, the layer of dust, the force of gravity) and of weightless pleasure. This sense of lightness and transparency (‘like a balloon’) is connected to the emancipatory potential of sex. Similarly, the semi-public ‘spaces of love’ suggest the city as a site for pleasure and adventure, contrasting and also connecting the intimacy of sex and the scale of the city. The immediate physical sensations of the body are central. Yet so too is the interaction of the body with the surrounding environment. Even when sex takes place indoors it is connected to the elements. Sun, rain and wind touch the body, as in ‘flying couple’: ‘the air cooled our hot skin’. Most striking, perhaps, is this ability to ‘jump’ between scales, to move smoothly from earth to sky and back again. Berkes’ Icarus does not pay for his audacity. Exploration and experimentation not only remain unpunished, but are presented as a path to personal autonomy and freedom. Here, the ‘play of scales’ seems light and effortless, merging bodies, home, and city in an emancipatory moment. A fantasy, of course, but a revealing one. Let us now turn to another kind of source, which nevertheless paints a similar picture of movement through scales and how this could create a sense of personal autonomy.

Finding My Way Through: Heidi Müller

Heidi Müller (pseudon.) was born in Magdeburg in 1963, and moved to Berlin with her family at the age of 12. During the 1980s she came out as a lesbian, and was a participant in both the Prenzlauer Berg subculture, and the gay activism taking place in the Protestant Church. She lived in Berlin until the early 1990s, when she moved to the former West Germany to

complete her studies. She now works as a civil servant in Hamburg, where I interviewed her in 2010.²⁸ Our semi-structured interview largely related to particular places in East Berlin. Yet revisiting the interview with this concept of scale in mind revealed a series of overlapping and intersecting scales.

Müller's biography was shaped by serendipity. When her family moved to Berlin in the mid-1970s, they settled in an apartment on Schönhauser Allee in Prenzlauer Berg. Müller found herself living in the 'warmest corner in the East'. Close to her home were the gay subculture, church meeting places, and the wider bohemian scene of Prenzlauer Berg, all of which were to become important at different times in her life. She also benefited from state, activist, friendship, and family networks which connected her to the world outside Berlin. While she was still a child, her mother's lesbian cousin visited from the West, leading to heated discussions of feminist issues. She spent nine months at university in Rostock, attended the 'lesbian spring meetings' in Dresden and Jena, holidayed on the coast, and gave serious thought to emigrating to the West. Her experiences outside Berlin threw the specificities of the capital into sharper relief. Müller said of Rostock: 'That was a massive contrast. There were no lesbians there, or only two or three or something like that...In Rostock there were really very very few lesbians living openly. That was certainly different in Berlin. Easier to get at things, exactly. [*Einfacher auch überall ranzukommen, genau.*]'

Nevertheless, in Müller's account, the city, or even the subcultures of Prenzlauer Berg, were not the primary scale at which she framed her experiences. What remained constant was the importance of home and her close circle of friends. Müller left her parents' home for an apartment in the same building, and her good friend Ingo Kölsch, who was gay, eventually squatted the apartment next door to her. Throughout the interview, Müller reflected on the strong sense of familiarity which she saw as unique to the East. Friends and acquaintances would drop in unannounced, and her flat was used for a whole range of activities: semi-political meetings, as a tanning studio, and as a drying-out clinic for an alcoholic friend. Rather than a place of withdrawal and privacy, the home was open and porous. Even her developing activism in church circles was framed in the context of a close friendship group:

Then I got to know some people, that was quite funny. That was a really mixed bag. At some point then we set up a gay-lesbian-bi-heterosexual group....We were all mid-twenties and met somewhere, dreamt something up, wrote it down, and went to the *Kirchentag*, had our own table there. And copied something in black-and-white and hung it up, and I don't know what... that was relatively independent from all those church groups and this church factionalism. We tried to make ourselves independent from that, and just simply to do something.

Rather than seeing her political engagement as part of the wider gay and lesbian movement within the Church, Müller re-scaled at the level of the home and friendship group. In this way, she was able to portray her politics as sociable, informal and heterogeneous, in contrast to what she saw as the over-serious, overly theoretical, and somewhat separatist 'factionalism' of other lesbian activists.

Yet while Müller's account in parts highlighted the cosiness and comradeship of East German life, she made clear that the private sphere was also permeable in a much less positive way. During our interview, Müller produced and read from her Stasi file. During her nine months in Rostock alone, a substantial set of paperwork had come together. The discovery of this file had not come as a shock. Asked whether she had been aware of the Stasi's presence at the time, she said:

Well yes. But that wasn't important. You lived with it, that there was always going to be somebody there who was with the Stasi... I don't know, it's so hard to describe, when you, when you simply live with it. The Stasi are simply there and when you have particular things to discuss, you just do it differently. You don't do it at home, you meet somewhere. I don't know. Things like that.

One striking thing about Müller's analysis is the way the Stasi and the rest of the East German state are seen as a single entity.

Until I was banned from going abroad, I didn't ever really consciously acknowledge that this was the Stasi. I think, that was more just the nature of this society. You weren't allowed to do a particular course of study, and this and that, so, I wouldn't blame that on the Stasi. I'd blame that on the country, on the system.

It is not uncommon for interviewees from the former East Germany to seek to draw a distinction between the (irredeemable) Stasi and the (potentially redeemable) broader system of GDR governance. Müller's perception that the two were indivisible seems in some ways to have been liberating. A few minutes later in the interview, she described slipping through a crack in the GDR system. By declaring her intention to return to study, and giving notice from her job, she found herself unemployed and was able to work illegally as a cloakroom attendant and pot-washer. The state of being outside the system gave her a powerful feeling of independence. 'Well, to find my way through this somehow and yes, to be able to do my own thing as well. What I want, whether it's, I don't know, thinking, reading, something like that.' Slipping the traces of the socialist state did not just provide a degree of freedom of action. It also provided a new mental freedom of manoeuvre. Reading and thinking – possible when operating within the system – seemed to have taken on a different quality.

By accepting the intersection of the scales of the state and the home, she was able to look around for space for self-actualization:

In the same way that the Stasi was a part of life, and you knew that there were always some people in the Stasi, in exactly the same way, for me a part of this was to find myself a niche. But a niche in which I could move freely, that I define myself, where I can move freely and be myself.

At first, this turn of phrase seems oxymoronic. Surely the very nature of a niche restricts free movement? Yet perhaps scale is the means of understanding this seemingly contradictory metaphor. Müller went where freedom of movement presented itself, moving through and between scales in the process. Her 'niche' was not based on the fantasy of a completely 'private' private sphere – which she was well aware could not exist. In common with Berkes, Müller represents the home as a base for moving between different scales, and a resource for individual identity. Throughout the interview she underlined her independence, and her capacity to move between groups and scales, without committing herself to their norms. She is able to situate her political activism at the level of just fooling around with her friends at home, at the same time acknowledging that it took place within the structures of Church activism. But what is striking is that, despite her use of the term 'niche', her focus on the home does not imply a retreat. For one thing, she is open about the impossibility of retreating from the power of the state. The Stasi's penetration of life had become so everyday that it had become 'unimportant'. The inescapability of state surveillance is, paradoxically, twinned with a simultaneous sense of freedom of movement.

Rescaling Ravensbrück

Yet it would be misleading to suggest that scale was simply a matter of imaginative liberation. With the final two sources, this discussion turns to the interactions between gay men and lesbians and the state authorities. Scale played an important role here, both in the way the state perceived these groups, and in the ways they attempted to challenge or co-opt the state's authority. The third case study demonstrates these conflicts between activists and others over the scale at which homosexuality (and in this case its history) was discussed. It concerns the efforts of 'Lesbians in the Church' group, which met at the Gethsemane–Church in Prenzlauer Berg, to commemorate lesbians who had been imprisoned in Ravensbrück concentration camp during the Third Reich.²⁹ It draws on the accounts and protocols of the group – themselves a strategy to officially record their activities and raise them beyond the level of the individual. The group's attempts at commemoration attempted to re-scale the history of Ravensbrück in a number of different ways: first, as a deliberate attempt to carry out activism beyond the boundaries of Berlin, and to engage with people outside Church or lesbian circles; secondly, by connecting the situation of lesbians in the 1980s to that of women in the Third Reich; third, by engaging with the discourse of antifascist resistance that was at the heart of the state's self-understanding and legitimization; and fourthly, by taking inspiration from gay liberation activists in West Germany and elsewhere in the West, who had made the pink triangle a potent symbol of lesbian and gay 'hidden histories'. Not for the first time, activists were attempting to relocate sexuality – often seen as a private matter – at the level of the state.

In 1984, a group from 'Lesbians in the Church' set out to visit Ravensbrück to mark International Women's Day on March 8. The choice of date was a deliberate attempt to insert lesbian concerns into a centrally determined framework: International Women's Day was a major event in the GDR calendar, with celebrations of women's contribution to society in almost every workplace and media outlet. Even before the day of their visit, the women set out to present themselves as a group, thereby giving themselves additional authority and legitimacy: 'we had registered as a working group (*Arbeitskreis*) and asked for a tour'.³⁰ During their visit to the museum, they noted that the sign explaining the different sorts of prisoners and their identification did not include the pink triangle. They wrote in the visitors' book, and laid a wreath, dedicated to 'the memory of the women of the former concentration camp Ravensbrück, and particularly our lesbian sisters'.³¹ A few days later, the women returned and found that their wreath and the entry in the visitors' book had been removed.

The following year, 1985, eleven women set out to travel to Ravensbrück to attend the official ceremony to mark the fortieth anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camps. When they collected the wreath they had ordered, the florist had refused to add the inscribed ribbon they had asked for. Furthermore, it transpired that s/he had informed the authorities of their intentions. Warned by the police not to present themselves as a group, they travelled individually to Fürstenberg train station. But on arrival, the police extracted the members of the group from the crowd and confined them in a lorry. For half an hour, they were driven round while being verbally abused by the young policemen, then held in a school classroom for three and a half hours, while they were individually interrogated. Eventually, once the ceremony was over, they were released and allowed to travel back to Berlin.³²

In protest at this treatment, the group wrote a petition to the Ministry of the Interior, as well as making a complaint to the police. They also contacted Emmi Handke, general secretary of the international Ravensbrück committee, and arranged a meeting with Anni Sindermann, the head of the GDR Ravensbrück committee. Both women had been imprisoned in Ravensbrück under the Third Reich. Three representatives of Lesbians in the Church met with Sindermann in her flat in early May 1985, to ask for her advice and help. Sindermann was clearly on the defensive from the start, beginning by saying that Emmi Handke had told her what had happened, so there was no need to go into the details. 'She explained that our democracy didn't go that far and could not allow that sort of thing. We asked what "that sort of thing" meant: "why, something lesbian (*sic*)" was her reply.' From Sindermann's point of view, the intention to commemorate lesbians and to lay a wreath dedicated to 'our lesbian sisters' was illegal and impossible. She began by saying that the women should never have tried to put themselves forward as a group (thereby challenging the existing structures of commemorative authority), but it quickly transpired that her main objection was to lesbianism *per se*. Reading between the lines of the report, Sindermann appears to have been quite agitated, and contradicts herself repeatedly. She herself had known no lesbians in the concentration camp, although she had had to rebuff the unwanted advances of a woman when she was in prison. She went on to say that 'we [the representatives of Lesbians in the Church] would have been treated much worse by the Nazis, after all most of "these women" had been killed by the Nazis.' In her own attempts at relativizing the women's mistreatment at the hands of the police, Sindermann stressed how much things had improved for women in the GDR. 'She didn't understand our concerns; in our state we had every possible opportunity as pretty, young, intelligent girls.' This patronizing tone was underlined by her use of the familiar 'Du' throughout the incident, while the lesbian delegation used the more formal 'Sie'.³³

The former concentration camps had very different meanings for Sindermann and her visitors. Sindermann had been imprisoned for a number of years during the Third Reich, and her husband had died while being interrogated by the Gestapo. Ravensbrück represented the communist struggle against fascism, and the personal sacrifices she and others had made. This history of antifascist resistance was an integral part of the pre-history of the GDR state, and naturally belonged at the national/international level. Sexuality, particularly homosexuality, in contrast, was something that could and should only be discussed in private, and it was entirely inappropriate to bring it up in this context. For the women of Lesbians in the Church, Ravensbrück symbolized state oppression of a minority, both in the Nazi period and in the present day. What's interesting about this encounter is the way both parties are constantly relocating Ravensbrück in wider contexts – the efforts of the GDR to emancipate women, international gay activism around the pink triangle, and their own personal experiences of state repression. In the process both parties engaged in re-scaling. Sindermann used her official function to elevate her personal experiences of the camp and her emotions about homosexuality to the level of state doctrine. The women of Lesbians in the Church engaged in a double re-scaling: first demanding that lesbianism be placed at the heart of state commemorative activity and its sacred sites; and secondly insisting that the commemorative process be determined not just at the level of the state, but by the population too.

Despite the bruising encounter with Sindermann, this tactical re-scaling was not entirely without success. Some of the women's other encounters were slightly more fruitful. They received a verbal apology from the Ministry of the Interior, who promised to look into the

possibility of some degree of recognition of the homosexual victims of Nazism. The following January (1986), Leipzig activists were for the first time able to attend the commemorations of the liberation of Buchenwald. In April 1986 the women travelled to Ravensbrück again, having pre-arranged a tour through the renovated museum and the laying of a floral tribute. They were welcomed by the director, and given a tour through the museum, noting that the pink triangle was now included in the display. They laid a bunch of flowers, and signed the visitors' book, concluding that perhaps the state authorities were 'able to learn' after all. However, a laconic PS to their report noted that a visit in May revealed that a new visitors' book had already been introduced, effectively removing the women's contribution from public view.³⁴

Gay Men at the Sexual Health Clinic

Struggles over the 'right scale' for the discussion of sexuality are also to be found in the fourth and final case study, a doctoral dissertation written by a student of criminology, Gerhard Fehr, and submitted in 1983 to the Humboldt University Berlin.³⁵ Its subject matter was a comparison between adult male homosexuals and 'delinquent' adolescent women, two groups that were perceived not only as promiscuous and prone to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), but also as a security risk. The dissertation set out to make a contribution to 'order and security in the capital' (8: this and all subsequent page numbers refer to Fehr's dissertation), through an investigation of these groups and the reasons for their high levels of syphilis and gonorrhoea. Much of the research had been carried out between April 1979 and December 1980 in the dermatology clinic in Berlin-Buch, where compulsory residential medical treatment for STDs took place (26). Twelve beds in a special section were kept free for homosexuals with syphilis (79), where Fehr and his research team carried out interviews with 202 gay men.³⁶

Why were gay men seen as a risk to 'order and security'? The preface to the dissertation made clear that both groups were seen as a security risk and as potentially 'asocial' (6). Yet even in the first pages, Fehr was forced to admit that gay men seemed more likely to be victims of crime than perpetrators (15). Nevertheless, the sense of a potentially dangerous and subversive group runs throughout the dissertation. Purportedly, the problem was not homosexuality *per se* – after all, this had been legalized by the GDR over a decade earlier. Rather, the research was motivated by a sense of anxiety about the scale of gay men's activities. The dissertation begins with a discussion of this problem: the 'concentration' of gay men in Berlin; the attempts to bring homosexuality to public attention at the World Festival Games in 1973, and to have homosexuals recognized as an official interest group in the 1970s; and large balls and parties, which according to this account were attended by 600 people (11–13).³⁷ A concentration of gay men in particular areas, streets, and houses was seen as a deliberate strategy on the part of the gay community, coordinated by its 'leadership'. (21, see also 82) The dissertation documented these concentrations, at the city level by attempting to calculate the total number of gay inhabitants, at the district level through a map which showed gay inhabitants and meeting points, and at the street and house level by listing the addresses where gay men lived. Fehr listed cruising spots in public toilets, some said to enjoy an 'international reputation' (93), and expressed concern about the numbers of gay men working in the gastronomic sector, and the 'crystallization' of gay and lesbian bars and pubs. (12)

These networks and connections between gay men were seen as a threat for a number of reasons. After all, Fehr stated confidently, 'it's a fact that homosexuals recognize each other immediately' (47). First, they were seen as a potential security risk. Homosexuals were 'a particularly interesting group for the class enemy and his networks of agents [*Agentenzentralen*]', because of their good connections with each other and with people from abroad (117). Secondly, there was not just a risk, but a certainty that such connections would lead to the subversion of state systems and the unequal distribution of resources. Fehr noted that a gay man vacating his flat would often pass it on unofficially to another member of the community, who would regularize this arrangement with the housing authorities once he was established as a resident (86). Third, there was a risk that the friendships and connections between gay men might undermine the solidarity of the socialist workplace. Fehr was unable to deny that homosexuals were good workers, and got on well with their colleagues, even when their sexual orientation was common knowledge (54). But, he went on to argue, 'it is a fact that is diametrically opposed to the socialist way of life that homosexuals favour and promote each other in the workplace' (54). Gay waiters, he claimed, tended to give free drinks to attractive guests and neglect other customers (55). (The possibility that heterosexual waiters might also do this was not considered.) There were also considerable anxieties about unregulated income from tips, and its potentially corrupting effects (56). Finally, large numbers of non-monogamous gay men in close proximity presented a sexual risk. In an attempt to measure and depict the scale of sexual contacts, he listed all the people that an eighteen-year-old patient had had sex with in a nine-month period. For each of the thirty-four men and one woman on the list, he gave their dates of birth, postcodes, and a description of the nature of the sexual contact (49–50). Nor (as the inclusion of a woman on this list suggests) was this sexual risk confined to the gay community. He noted that his interviewees pointed out increasing sexual contact with married men.

In the [medical] examinations alone, sixteen homosexuals reported repeated and long-term sexual contact with married men, who would in no sense describe themselves as homo- or bisexual, but only surrendered themselves to these manipulations out of sympathy or on other not yet fully clarified grounds, that probably lie in sexual problems in marriage. (107)

As so often with homophobic discourses, risk of 'infection' loomed large, both in the sense of the spread of disease, and in terms of heterosexual participation in same-sex activity, on whatever 'not yet fully clarified grounds'. Male homosexuality, then, was seen as a risk largely due to its scale, and its concentration in particular areas.

The clinic itself was not immune to such patterns of group formation. By creating a special ward for gay men, the authorities had created a space within the health care system, where sociability and political discussion could seem to drown out medical and moral rehabilitation. Treatment lasted 28 days, and after ten days, the patients were allowed to move around the clinic and visit each other. 20–25% of those interviewed had been treated in the clinic before. Fehr described them as 'sociable', and alleged that in 1981 the head of the clinic had had to take steps to restrict contact between his homosexual patients as new sexual relationships were emerging. A further problem for the managers of the clinic were the high numbers of visitors from the West, who arrived bearing 'large and expensive gifts' (24). Fehr repeatedly complained that his gay research subjects did not feel responsible for the cost of their treatment or their time away from work. Nor did their behaviour on the ward show the requisite qualities of self-restraint and penitential remorse:

They are undisciplined, fail to follow rules and medical orders, take up illicit contact with each other...They see only their own situation, brood over their partners, are often very restless, because they can't move around freely, and make plans for making up for the "lost time" (79).

Despite the pathologization of homosexuality in the dissertation, Fehr was unable to prevent a note of admiration creeping into his discussion of his gay male subjects. They were good workers and got on with their colleagues (54); they were resourceful do-it-yourself-ers, who made even the most unpromising flat into a cosy home (39); some were even members of the Socialist Unity Party, the block parties, or acted as trade union representatives (40). As research subjects, they left little to be desired: only two refused to be interviewed, and participants 'gave their opinion about their problems amazingly openly' (31). They were happy to talk individually and in groups, and even invited the researchers to their homes, where they organized larger meetings of up to a dozen people to continue the discussion in a wider circle (32). Fehr heaped praise on the climate of these meetings:

We were particularly astounded to note how open and searchingly the homosexuals talked. It was noticeable that no opinions of the younger or older [members of the group] were dismissed, even when the majority held a different opinion. (32)

The contrast to Fehr's other research subjects, the female adolescents, was marked. This group was characterized as aggressive, violent, and prone to escape attempts (25). 40% refused to cooperate with the research at all, and a further 20% refused to answer any questions, freely admitting they had only agreed to participate in order to have the opportunity to smoke (27–8). Although the research had been conceptualized as a comparative study, these groups differed not only in their attitudes towards the research project, but in almost every other respect too. Only on one scale – the infection of the body with sexually transmitted diseases – did these two groups have anything in common.

It is clear that these levels of cooperation on the part of gay men were more than simply good manners. Despite the fact that those interviewed for the project were generally young, they demonstrated a remarkable level of political articulacy, repeatedly bringing the conversation back to the necessity of political and public recognition of homosexuality (31). Playing on the state's sense of their rights and duties, they suggested that as homosexuals were among 'the most uncomplicated and disciplined citizens, the state should allow them more rights. In the GDR too there was a particular need for more published material and films for homosexuals.' (32) The rights alluded to here were those of information, assembly, and freedom of movement. They were open about their links to the West – perhaps reasoning that these were already evident – and their desire to visit the West, not for good, but to 'get to know the life of a homosexual in a western state' (41). Thus, Fehr's subjects attempted to re-scale and re-direct the direction of his research away from the perceived pathologies of the gay community towards the rights of homosexual citizens.

Fehr and his gay research subjects both used scale as a way of discussing the tricky subject of male homosexuality. For Fehr, scale was a central problem. His concern was not individual same-sex sexual acts, but the potential impact of the groups formed by gay male sexuality and sociability. As isolated individuals, gay men were containable. As part of a sexual, social, and potentially political network, they became a threat to 'order and security'. His gay research subjects, on the other hand, proved extremely adept at re-scaling the issue, moving away from the level of the individual to the rights of the group as a whole. Rather than the diseased, incarcerated body, or the pathologized waiter with his hand in the till, they drew attention to the strengths and qualities of homosexual men as a group, their contribution to society,

and their rights as socialist citizens. Like the members of Lesbians in the Church, they attempted to contest state authority on its own terms, in this case drawing attention to their qualities as workers and socialist citizens. Both groups were dogged and polite, accepting official scalar hierarchies, but insisting that the issue of sexuality needed to be considered at the level of the state and society rather than as an individual problem.

Conclusion

The GDR, like the rest of Europe, saw dramatic social, economic and cultural changes between the 1950s and the 1980s. The East German state tried to adapt to these changes while also containing them. A sense of scale was central to this mixture of pragmatism and coercion: the authorities attempted to keep homosexuality in 'the right place', aggressively policing any attempts to bring the subject out of the home and into the public sphere. But as this examination of the production of scale has shown, categories such as 'public' and 'private' are inadequate in understanding the realities of everyday life in the GDR and how individuals made sense of it. Individual responses to both the restrictions of the private sphere and its permeation by the secret police were more complex than simply a retreat into privatization or mental flight to the 'Imaginary West'. As the four case studies show, the home was an important place of privacy and retreat, but also a site of organization and social solidarity, acting variously as a sanatorium, library, social club, and political forum. Likewise, the West was an significant presence and influence, but it did not by any means dominate people's political or cultural self-understandings.

These sources suggest that the production of scale enabled a sense of autonomy and a means of contesting or disrupting the established scalar hierarchies of state socialism. This took place in two main forms. First, choosing the scale on which one located one's actions could create a feeling of independence, of slipping the traces of socialist rule. For Ulrich Berkes, this involved floating free of the socialist apartment, transcending the material and physical restrictions of GDR life through the pleasures of sex and fantasy. For Heidi Müller, dropping out of the structures of socialist employment created mental space, a feeling that she had reclaimed her inner life from the ever-present authority of the state. Second, the production and appropriation of scale was used as a conscious political strategy. In the work of Lesbians in the Church, and the loose alliance of men at the Berlin-Buch clinic, scale was a means to contest state authority on its own terms. Re-scaling sexuality was a way of moving from the private to the public sphere – 'Out of the toilets and onto the streets', as Rosa von Praunheim put it in the West German context. The authorities saw homosexuality as something to be dealt with at the level of the individual body: the treatment of disease, or the integration of a misfit into society. The activism to be found in the final two case studies relocated same-sex relationships in areas that were not only public, but also central to the self-understanding of the socialist state: antifascist resistance and its commemoration, the world of work, socialist citizenship. This was a provocative strategy, and the unease and confusion that it created in representatives of authority such as Fehr and Sindermann jumps off the page. The rigidities of state-socialist scalar hierarchies (from the subordinated individual citizen through to the ultimate authority of the USSR) were one of their key vulnerabilities.

Individuals' mental production of scale and re-scaling as a political strategy use quite different concepts of 'scale'. In the latter, activists worked deliberately with the state's scalar

imaginary, attempting to push their own political cause up a scalar ladder, in which the individual and the domestic occupied the lower rungs, with the East German state and the success of the international communist project on the uppermost rungs. Individual conceptions of scale are much more fluid. Berkes' figures are able to move between scales effortlessly and painlessly, even inhabiting multiple scalar points simultaneously. Müller's oral history account displays a more pragmatic preoccupation with 'making [her] way through', but there is nonetheless a liquidity in her self-depiction of slipping between different groups and eventually circumventing the blockages of socialism altogether. Here, scale is less linear and hierarchical. Different points on a scale can intersect, and individuals can move easily through and between them.

Of course there were limits to this scalar reimagining. In all four cases, these women and men experienced very real barriers to autonomy. The playfulness of Berkes' poetry contrasts with the frustrations detailed in his autobiographical writings, published in the 1980s. Müller considered emigrating to the West. The activists of Lesbians in the Church were physically prevented from attending the 1985 commemoration, and subjected to frightening and disorientating hours in police custody. Treatment in the STD clinic at Berlin-Buch was mandatory and carceral. The state and its organs possessed both power and determination to impose, maintain and defend official scalar hierarchies. In a world where the hegemony and legitimacy of the state was already under threat, the everyday activism of the gay and lesbian population was deeply disturbing. As Müller commented on her own Stasi file:

I was amazed at how meticulously they collected things that you yourself considered to be completely unimportant. And that they went to that effort. I mean I really – hardly appeared anywhere in public, only always on the edges, and to go to that effort – well, what a lot of work!

Yet for all that work, the East German authorities failed to build up an accurate picture of gay and lesbian life, let alone control it. Both individuals and nascent political collectives pursued the right to interpret a rapidly changing world in their own way. In putting themselves on the map, they doggedly insisted on their own choice of scale.

Notes

1. Paul Betts, *Within Walls: Private Life in the German Democratic Republic* (Oxford University Press, 2010), Paulina Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV: The Culture of Communism after the 1968 Prague Spring* (Cornell University Press, 2010).
2. See for example the chapters by Judit Takács and Daniel Healey on Budapest and Moscow in Jennifer V. Evans and Matt Cook (eds.), *Queer Cities, Queer Cultures. Europe Since 1945* (Bloomsbury, 2014).
3. Alexei Yurchak *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), ch. 5.
4. Juliane Fürst, 'Love, Peace and Rock 'n' Roll on Gorky Street: The "Emotional Style" of the Soviet Hippie Community', *Contemporary European History* 23 (4) (2014), 565–587.
5. Marta Marciniak, 'Out of nihilism to nothing outside punk: A transnational history of punk communities in Poland and the U.S.' (PhD thesis: State University of New York at Buffalo, 2014). On punk in the GDR, and its connections to the West, see Jeff Hayton, 'Härte gegen Punk: Popular Music, Western Media, and State Response in the German Democratic Republic', *German History* 31 (4) (2013), 523–549.
6. On the more general question of how 'thinking in different spatial horizons' can create conflict between 'global aspirations' and 'local realities' see Joachim Haeberlen, 'Between global aspirations and local realities: the global dimensions of interwar communism', *Journal of Global History* 7 (2012), 415–437, here 418.

7. E.g. on the 'domestication' of Third World struggles in France, the Netherlands, and Hungary, see Robert Gildea, James Mark and Niek Pas, 'European Radicals and the "Third World": Imagined Solidarities and Radical Networks, 1958–1973', *Cultural and Social History* 8 (4) (2011), 449–472.
8. Günter Grau, 'Return of the Past: The Policy of the SED and the Laws against Homosexuality in Eastern Germany Between 1946 and 1968', *Journal of Homosexuality* 37 (1999), 1–29.
9. Jones, 'Scale as epistemology'.
10. The geographical literature on 'scale' is vast. See Andrew Herod, *Scale* (New York: Routledge, 2010) for an excellent introduction. On scale and geographies of sexuality, see Lynda Johnston and Robyn Longhurst, *Space, Place, and Sex: Geographies of Sexualities* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010).
11. See for example Sallie A. Marston, 'The social construction of scale', *Progress in Human Geography* 24 (2) (2000), 219–242; Neil Brenner, 'The limits to scale? Methodological reflections on scalar structuration', *Progress in Human Geography* 25 (4) (2001), 591–614; Sallie Marston and Neil Smith, 'States, scales and households. Limits to scalar thinking?' *Progress in Human Geography* 25 (4) (2001), 615–619; Sallie A. Marston, John Paul Jones III, Keith Woodward, 'Human Geography without scale?', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30 (2005), 416–32.
12. Jacques Revel et al., *Jeux d'échelles: la micro-analyse à l'expérience* (Paris: Seuil, 1996).
13. Two exceptions are Bernhard Struck, Kate Ferris, and Jacques Revel, 'Introduction: Space and Scale in Transnational History', *The International History Review* 33:4 (2011), 573–584; Antoinette Burton, 'Not Even Remotely Global? Method and Scale in World History', *History Workshop Journal* 64 (1)(2007), 323–328, here 326.
14. Bernard Lepetit, 'De l'échelle en histoire', in Revel et al., *Jeux d'échelles* pp. 71–94, here 86.
15. On sexuality and the city see esp. Matthew Houlbrook, *Queer London. Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918–1957* (Chicago, 2005) and Jennifer Evans, *Life Among the Ruins: Cityscape and Sexuality in Cold War Berlin* (Palgrave, 2011).
16. On socialist planning policy, see Eli Rubin, 'Amnesiopolis: From Mietskasernen to Wohnungsbauserie 70 in East Berlin's Northeast', *Central European History* 47 (2) (June 2014), 334–374. On gay and lesbian life in Prenzlauer Berg, see *Verzaubert in Nord-Ost. Die Geschichte der Berliner Lesben und Schwulen in Prenzlauer Berg, Pankow und Weißensee* (Berlin: Sonntags-Club/Bruno Gmünder, 2009).
17. See here *Verzaubert in Nord-Ost* and the interviews cited in Josie McLellan, *Love in the Time of Communism: Intimacy and Sexuality in the German Democratic Republic* (Cambridge, 2011).
18. Josie McLellan, 'Private photography and the queering of East German visual culture', forthcoming, *Central European History*, autumn 2015.
19. Josie McLellan, 'Glad to be Gay Behind the Wall: Gay and Lesbian Activism in 1970s East Germany', *History Workshop Journal* 74 (1) (2012), 105–130.
20. McLellan, 'Glad to be Gay Behind the Wall'; McLellan, *Love In The Time of Communism*.
21. On the HIB, see McLellan, 'Glad to be Gay Behind the Wall'.
22. On homosexuality in the later GDR, see Jennifer Evans, 'Decriminalization, Seduction, and "Unnatural Desire" in the German Democratic Republic', *Feminist Studies* 36 (3) (2010), 553–577; McLellan, *Love in the Time of Communism*; Greg Taylor, 'The East German Contribution to Equal Gay and Lesbian Rights in Germany', *American Journal of Legal History* (34) (2014), 303–350.
23. Ulrich Berkes, *Ikarus über der Stadt. Prosagedichte* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1976).
24. Ibid, p. 77.
25. Ibid., p. 99.
26. Ibid., p. 46.
27. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 54, 50–51.
28. Author's interview with Heidi Müller, 29.6.2010.
29. See McLellan, *Love In The Time of Communism* and especially Dara Bryant, 'Queering the Antifascist State: Ravensbrück as a Site of Lesbian Resistance', *Edinburgh German Yearbook* 3. *Contested Legacies: Constructions of Cultural Heritage in the GDR* (2009), 76–89.
30. Bericht der "Lesben in der Kirche" ("Arbeitskreis Homosexuelle Selbsthilfe") über ihre Besuche im KZ Ravensbrück'. Reproduced in Samirah Kenawi, *Frauengruppen in der DDR der 80er Jahre. Eine Dokumentation* (Berlin, 1995), 388.

31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., 388–9.
33. 'Gespräch mit frau anni sindermann – vorsitzende des nationalen ravensbrückkomitees der ddr – am 3.5.1985 in ihrer wohnung'. Reproduced in Samirah Kenawi, *Frauengruppen in der DDR*, 393–4.
34. Bericht der "Lesben in der Kirche" in Kenawi, *Frauengruppen in der DDR*, 389–90.
35. Gerhard Fehr, 'Zu einigen Aspekten der Risikogruppe der männlichen Homosexuellen und der Riskiogruppe der kriminellgefährdeten, nicht lesbischen, weiblichen Jugendlichen und Jungerwachsenen in der Hauptstadt Berlin' (PhD dissertation, Humboldt University Berlin, 1983).
36. This group was, unsurprisingly, unrepresentative of the homosexual population as a whole. 59% were under 30. 60% worked in the service sector, mostly in catering.
37. Like many of Fehr's claims, this seems inaccurate and unlikely. Interviews with participants of the gay scene suggest that balls were usually attended by approximately 100 people.

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